



MITT ROMNEY  
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY  
LT. GOVERNOR

EDWARD A. FLYNN  
SECRETARY

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety  
Department of Fire Services

P.O. Box 1025 ~ State Road

Stow, Massachusetts 01775

(978) 567~3100 Fax: (978) 567~3121



STEPHEN D. COAN  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

THOMAS P. LEONARD  
DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL

For Immediate Release; May 12, 2004  
Contact: Fire Chief Steven Pasdon, (978) 538-1210  
Jennifer Mieth, DFS, (978) 567-3318

**Maintenance Man Convicted for Setting Hampton Inn Fire**

Erasmo Gutierrez has been convicted of deliberately setting the January 16, 2002 fire at the Hampton Inn in Peabody. He was sentenced to 1-2 years at MCI Cedar Junction, with three years probation at the end of his sentence. At the end of his sentence, Mr. Gutierrez, who is not a U.S. citizen but is in the country legally, may face deportation to Mexico.

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan said, "This fire could easily have been a devastating loss of human life if it were not for the automatic sprinkler system in the hotel. There 112 people staying or working in the hotel at the time of the fire who were forced into the street on a cold January night."

Peabody Fire Chief Steven Pasdon said, "The Peabody Fire and Police Departments have been developing the local fire cause and origin and investigation skills. We have implemented the successful witness-driven team-concept of fire investigation embraced by the Office of the State Fire Marshal that has a demonstrated record of leading to successful cause determinations and arson prosecutions, borne out by Mr. Gutierrez' conviction."

Chief Pasdon added, "We will aggressively and relentlessly investigate every fire in this city and we will catch and convict anyone who threatens our citizens with fire."

Mr. Gutierrez was an employee of the Hampton Inn, located on Route 1, at the time he set the fire in 2002. He was convicted in Lawrence Superior Court on one count of arson of a dwelling and one counts of entering without breaking to commit a felony.

The fire was jointly investigated by State Police investigators assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, and fire investigators in the Peabody Police and Fire Departments. The case was prosecuted by the Essex District Attorney's Office.